

Is there a Doctor in the "HOUSE"?

by Lilian Mustelier

This is an editorial, an opinion or a fact finder. Take your pick. Here is the story:
It amazes me how sometimes a series of events and/or circumstances can result of us landing in the middle of a can of worms. Since I do not fish that is NOT a good thing.... or is it?

For 20+ plus years I had the same Physician. For 20+ plus years we struggled finding medications which are agreeable with my roller coaster of allergies and reaction to chemicals and synthetics we have managed to put into medications. The day came when my Doctor closed his practice in order to become Chef of Diagnostics at a local hospital. I was happy for him since, according to him, he could be Dr. House with a Dr. Welby attitude. As a result of him leaving there were 2,500 of his patients which needed to be absorbed into a health system already overloaded. My TV Viewers followed us right along since I had at one point made them aware of my sometimes unusual conditions. They got regular updates and in 2004 my book: Remembering your Future was released. Aside from the people which graced my show: "A Visit with a Person of High Strangeness" it became the setting for the book.

Trouble came over the horizon shortly after the doctor left. Many records were either misplaced and some of them ended up archived in a basement. I went DOCTOR SHOPPING. I, a fairly intelligent person, did not know this was the wrong term and I was too naive to realize this for about 2 1/2 years. Well, I am getting ahead of myself.

Because of the type of insurance I carry it was hard to find a doctor to accept me as a patient. Changing insurance was out of the question due to multiple pre-existing conditions. I was accepted by a country doctor in a little town about 15 miles away. He was nice, except he insisted on giving me a diagnosis of a disease I did not have. It required me to get a blood test every 3 weeks and ended on my 3rd visit when the nurse injured a tendon in my right arm which has been healing for 2 years and the ability for me to use the arm is a rare occasion. This problem is ongoing.

Dr. Number 2 was local, nice and had great bedside manners. He immediately decided to change my heart medication of 27 years to something else, assumingly because it was easier to obtain. I refused and made him aware that the medication he suggested was for migraines rather than my heart condition. Eventually I won the power struggle we engaged in, lucky me, my heart is still beating. The can of worms arrived when I contracted a very bad bacterial infection. I went to the hospital where my original doctor worked hoping if anything failed he could "save" me. The cocktail of antibiotics I was given made me deathly ill. I followed up with Dr. Number 2. Driving to his office was dangerous, not only to myself, but also to others, since I had to stop in the middle of the street in fear I would pass out. When I arrived at his office all I could do was lay across the hood of the car and wait for someone to find me. Someone did. Instead of escorting me into one of the empty rooms I was asked to fill out papers. Our power struggle reared it's head, he refused to listen to me when I told him I was allergic to at least one of the medicines. He insisted I finish the dose. I also made him aware I now had a yeast infection, he asked me to open my mouth and say: AHHH. I said: "Excuse me, it is on the other end." He did give me a prescription for that.

Not only did I get worse I now had excruciating pain in my legs. A request for a referral to

another Doctor was denied, only after I filed a complain was I referred to my Gastroenterologist. He immediately reminded me that I was allergic to one of the medicines. After a relapse the infection was conquered. The pain in one of my legs persisted. I ran out of Tylenol #3, the ONLY pain medication I can take. I refused to take Neurontin, Vicodin and a long list of pain killers I was unable to take. I was referred to a bone specialist, he thought my hips, back and knee were in great shape for my age, 60, refereed back to the Gastroenterologist and now to a Neurologist. I knew him and the Gastroenterologist for better that 30 years. Both agreed it was not only time, but also appropriated to find a new physician on record.

A new Doctor joined the staff in a small clinic 30 miles away, he agreed to see me. Still NO RECORDS. I liked him real well, he was open-minded, courteous and thorough. He explained to me that pain control was not on his agenda for personal reasons. I felt bad when he did, in fact, overstepped his principle once and I voiced this to the other doctors. They felt this relationship was doomed since I will be in pain from now on. They advised me to keep shopping.

While all of this is happening I still have to produce a TV show each week, the Cadillac Walker my daughter bought me for my birthday is burning rubber, I notified everyone not to get upset when I cry out in pain and become verbal between yelps and muffled screams. A friend dropped me off at the place Dennis Kucinich, the presidential candidate and his wife Elizabeth, visited with some of us. This being my 3rd visit with him, he asked what happened to me, pointing to the walker, I laughed and said: "Just old age." He said: "RIGHT!"

I managed to conduct interviews for upcoming shows. I had the opportunity to attend a court hearing in which I learned that many young people are in jail because they are drug users, it violates their probation for various minor infractions, therefore they serve repeated jail sentences. I addressed this issue in the April 2007 Newsletter.

I secured an interview with a young woman, an addict, in which she very freely shared the plight of addiction. In essence what happened was she was married, had 2 children and a nice house. When her husband lost his job, they were issued food stamps temporarily. The husband stole her food stamps and sold them. As a result she became very angry, a fight broke out and she broke the window in her own house. She spent 3 days in jail and was sentenced to probation. She was unable to return to her house, her and her children were homeless. Between following the rules of her probation, classes, Parole Officer appearances, looking for work and the stresses of being homeless she acquired new friends which were more understanding of her dilemma than her previous circle of acquaintances. CPS took her children from her, according to her she gave up and started to take drugs. She spent a total of 273 days in jail for probation violations due to her drug USE, not the domestic violence charge she had originally. She told about being taken to the other side of the state in shackles with no-one able to visit due to the distance. She is clean now but struggles each day with her dilemma, she called it her "involuntary circumstances." She took full responsibility for the choices she made. I thanked her for giving me a little insight to the world which is so foreign to me.

My lucky day! I have an appointment with a Lady Doctor. I am excited! I arrive at the clinic, yes, I do speak English.... I fill out the forms requested in English.

I hear a conversation between a clerk and a representative from a Pharmaceutical Company. The clerk tells the man no-one is in the market for his drugs since everyone coming to their clinic uses Generics, they are all disadvantaged people, but to feel free to check back another day. He leaves.

My medical coverage is good till 2099.....2099..., I am asked to disclose my income, I am asked to prove my income.

I am weighed in, my blood pressure is good. The forms have very few questions about my illness or complaint rather it dealt with family history, arrests and unrelated issues. Smoking, alcohol, coffee and across counter medication, herbs and such. The Lady Doctor comes in, very pleasant, she asks what I am there for. I tell her I am Doctor Shopping.... wrong term.... Not once did she ask what my complaints were, why I was walking on a walker or what illness brought me there. I attempt to explain to her why I need a physician on record, mainly for prescriptions. I brought along my MRI, X-rays, letter of findings and numerous bottles of painkillers I am unable to take. She implies the pill bottles make me subject to becoming a victim of a robbery. I missed her point, so she explained how people get robbed because of pills. She missed my point, the fact that I wanted to show her how much time, effort and money was wasted trying to talk me into something my body retaliated against.

She said she did not prescribe medications on the first visit, she needed to get to know me and asked for me to take a urine sample. I mentioned I had no problems there, she informed me it was a drug test so she can see that what I told her and what I take matches. I said explain, she said people smoke WEED, take unauthorized medication and drink. She asked me to sign numerous papers, which I thought I needed to read before signing and she said, in passing,,,,, I would have random drug testing while in her care. I DON'T THINK SO!!!!!! I LEFT!

Once I stopped shaking I drove to a nearby parking lot to collect my thoughts.

I felt insulted, betrayed, inadequate, defenseless. Big Brother at it's finest.

It brought to mind the newsletter I had just written.

Dennis Kucinich telling us we were already free, only needing a Leader to understand this.

The young woman addict sharing her frustrations about the maze of rules.

I imagined someone appearing at my door steps demanding a drug test at random.

I thought about the possibility of my torturous pain to last forever.

I thought about Robert Daniels, the young man incarcerated in a jail cell at Maricopa Medical Center in Arizona. He has no warm water, he has been unable to take a shower or wash his hair since January 2007. He is in solitary confinement without TV, books or a radio. He is allowed to use a phone after 4PM to call people which cannot afford to accept his phone calls due to the outrageous prices charged. He is in Civil confinement which includes but is not limited to Mental Illness. He is supposed to have the right to be treated with what is considered humane and human. His wife and child have not been able to visit in some time. His "CRIME"..... he had contracted an incurable strain of TB while in Russia.

I thought about the recently released prisoner from Texas. He was convicted of a \$ 2.00 robbery when he was 17. While on probation he was caught smoking a joint. He was convicted of a parole violation and sentenced to life without parole. He is 34 at present. It took all of these years for someone to take up his plight and secure a full pardon from the Governor of Texas.

I thought about the young Addict telling me how many people in the system are not able to work in many areas, She is a caregiver. I thought about me as an old person or a cancer patients which not only has trouble obtaining pain medication, but may not be able to get a full dose of what I need, since people taking care of me are addicts. The Young Woman pointed that out to me. She was talking of her own struggle rather than to imply this would happen with anyone else in the profession.

I thought about my friend Dr. Gilbert Jordan. He always feels he has to prove everything he says. He is a Nobel Prize Nominee in Physics, even a man of his stature feels he is accountable to someone in triplicate. I did not understand that until I discussed this with a friend. I owe DR. Jordan an apology for separating him and his paper-trail-proof on one of our shows.

I thought about Dr. House and his dilemma. A TV character, true, but I understand his frustrations.

I thought about my friends, which talk me through some nights when sleep is impossible, because I am in so much pain. The frustration they share with me when I do not know what to do, their feeling of helplessness.

I wondered what the outcome had been, had I refused taking the pills I knew had given me this reaction in the first place.... I guess there would not have been a need for this story.

I am hoping for a miracle so my pain will cease.

I am hoping for a Physician to come to my aid and treat me with respect.

I am hoping for a balance.

I am hoping for a system which treats people justly.

It is said everything happens for a reason, I hope I will see the reason for my affliction.... eventually. I am not sure if I am willing to accept tortures and immobilizing pain.

WHAT DOES THAT MAKE ME?

We accept articles and opinions on this and other subjects. It is time to take a closer look at things right under our noses, missed by many.... until it becomes a personal experience.